

**THE STATE CORPORATION COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF KANSAS**

Before Commissioners: Andrew J. French, Chairperson
 Dwight D. Keen
 Annie Kuether

In the Matter of a Petition to Eliminate Any)
Commission Requirement to Distribute) Docket No. 24-GIMT-380-MIS
Annually a Printed Directory.)

**ORDER ADOPTING JOINT STAFF AND RLECs PROPOSED REPLACEMENT FOR
1967 DIRECTIVE REGARDING DIRECTORIES**

This matter comes before the State Corporation Commission of the State of Kansas (“Commission”) for consideration and decision. Having reviewed the pleadings and record, the Commission makes the following findings:

1. On November 6, 2023, the Rural Local Exchange Carriers (RLECs)¹ filed a Request for a General Investigation and to Eliminate any Commission Requirement to Distribute Annually a Printed Directory. Instead, the RLECs seek permission to provide directories in any format an individual RLEC deems most cost-effective, including electronic or web-based, and provide a simple paper/PDF copy to customers upon request.²
2. The RLECs seek a permanent waiver of, or exemption from, the Commission’s May 1, 1967 Directive (Directive) on the subject of the Issuance of Telephone Directories, which determined that all telephone companies operating in Kansas must issue a telephone directory on

¹ Blue Valley Tele-Communications, Inc., Columbus Communications Services, LLC, Craw-Kan Telephone Cooperative, Inc., Cunningham Telephone Co., Inc., Golden Belt Telephone Association, Inc., Gorham Telephone Co., Inc., H&B Communications, Inc., Haviland Telephone Co., Inc., Home Telephone Co., Inc. JBN Telephone Company, Inc., KanOkla Telephone Association, LaHarpe Telephone Co., Inc., Madison Telephone, LLC, Moundridge Telephone Co., Inc., Peoples Telecommunications, LLC, Pioneer Telephone Association, Inc., Rainbow Telecommunications Association, Inc., Rural Telephone Service Co., Inc. d/b/a NexTech, S&A Telephone Co., LLC, S&T Telephone Cooperative Association, Inc., South Central Telephone Association, Inc., Southern Kansas Telephone Co., Inc., Totah Communications, Inc., Tri-County Telephone Association, Inc., Twin Valley Telephone, Inc., United Telephone Association, Inc., Wamego Telecommunications Co., Inc., Wilson Telephone Co., Inc., and Zenda Telephone Co., Inc.

² Request for a General Investigation and to Eliminate any Commission Requirement to Distribute Annually a Printed Directory, Nov. 6, 2023, ¶ 1.

an annual basis. The RLECs explain that eliminating the requirement to issue an annual directory would result in an immediate costs savings.³ The RLECs also note that CenturyLink was granted a waiver from the Directive in Docket No. 16-UTDT-568-MIS, and that over the five-year tracking period, CenturyLink recorded no customer complaints, with just over 100 requests for printed directories from a customer base of 21,000.⁴

3. On December 5, 2023, the Commission opened the requested general investigation to consider the need for the RLECs to continue to print and distribute a telephone directory to their subscribers.⁵

4. On March 12, 2024, the RLECs proposed that each RLEC provide at least 90-days' notice to all of the customers prior to ceasing the distribution of a printed directory.⁶ The RLECs envisioned providing notice through bill messages, bill inserts, website announcements, and social media messaging, with information on (1) accessing any online or electronic directory, and (2) requesting a paper copy of the directory.⁷

5. On August 15, 2024, Commission Staff (Staff) and the RLECs filed a Joint Proposed Replacement for 1967 Directive Regarding Directories, jointly requesting a waiver for the RLECs from the Directive, and allowing the RLECs to make directories available to subscribers in any format or manner an individual RLEC deems most cost-effective, including electronic or web-based form, and upon request, provide any subscriber a simple paper/PDF copy of directory information.⁸ The Joint Proposal clarifies that each RLEC has discretion to continue to distribute a formal bound and printed directory.⁹

³ *Id.*, ¶ 5.

⁴ *Id.*, ¶ 4.

⁵ Order Approving Request for a General Investigation, Dec. 5, 2023, ¶ 2.

⁶ Proposed Replacement for 1967 Directive Regarding Directories, Mar. 12, 2024, ¶ 3.

⁷ *Id.*, ¶¶ 3-4.

⁸ Joint Proposed Replacement for 1967 Directive Regarding Directories, Aug. 15, 2024, ¶ 3.

⁹ *Id.*

6. Under the Joint Proposal:

- Each RLEC will provide at least 90 days' notice before ceasing the distribution of a printed directory to every subscriber, through bill messages, bill inserts, website announcements and social media messaging, including information on (1) accessing any online or electronic directory, and (2) requesting a paper copy of the directory from the RLEC;
- The notice will also include information on how customers can communicate with the respective RLEC, or the Commission;
- The RLEC will inform new customers that they will not be receiving a printed directory, and will provide new customers with information on how to access an online directory or obtain a printed directory upon request; and
- RLECs, that elect to stop distributing directories, will send annual reminders to their customers that a printed directory will no longer be provided, but that the customer may request a simple paper/PDF copy of directory information.

7. Pursuant to K.A.R. 82-1-230(h), the Commission takes administrative notice of its Order Approving Stipulation and Agreement issued August 1, 2017, in Docket No. 16-UTDT-568-MIS (16-568 Docket), which granted CenturyLink a waiver from the Directive. The Commission also takes administrative notice of the Order Closing Docket, dated July 20, 2021, in the 16-568 Docket, which noted from April 2018-June 2021, the Commission's Office of Public Affairs and Consumer Protection (PACP) received no comments or complaints resulting from CenturyLink's waiver, and that only 105 requests for printed directories were made.¹⁰

¹⁰ Order Closing Docket, July 20, 2021, ¶ 8.

8. Since the waiver from the Directive given to CenturyLink in the 16-568 Docket has been well received, the Commission believes a similar waiver is appropriate for the RLECs. Accordingly, the Commission grants Staff and the RLECs' Joint Proposal. The RLECs' request to (1) eliminate any requirement currently existing that mandates the RLECs physically print and distribute a telephone directory to subscribers; and (2) allow the RLECs to provide directories in any format or manner an individual RLEC deems most cost-effective, including electronic or web-based, and provide a simple paper/PDF copy to subscribers upon request, subject to the conditions outlined in paragraph 6 of this Order is approved.

THEREFORE, THE COMMISSION ORDERS:

A. The Joint Proposed Replacement for 1967 Directive Regarding Directories is adopted and incorporated herein. The Joint Proposed Replacement for 1967 Directive Regarding Directories is attached as Attachment A.

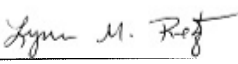
B. Any party may file and serve a petition for reconsideration pursuant to the requirements and time limits established by K.S.A. 77-529(a)(1).¹¹

BY THE COMMISSION IT IS SO ORDERED.

French, Chairperson; Keen, Commissioner; Kuether, Commissioner.

Dated: 08/22/2024

BGF



Lynn M. Retz
Executive Director

¹¹ K.S.A. 66-118b; K.S.A. 77-503(c); K.S.A. 77-351(b).

BEFORE THE STATE CORPORATION COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF KANSAS

In the Matter of a Petition to Eliminate Any)
Commission Requirement to Distribute) Docket No. 24-GIMT-380-MIS
Annually a Printed Directory.)

**JOINT STAFF AND RLEC PROPOSED REPLACEMENT FOR 1967 DIRECTIVE
REGARDING DIRECTORIES**

COME NOW the Rural Local Exchange Carriers (“RLECs”)¹ and the Staff of the State Corporation Commission of the State of Kansas (“Staff”) and for their joint proposed replacement of any existing Commission requirement to distribute annually a printed directory, state as follows:

1. Given that several RLECs are facing or will soon be facing a decision whether to enter into a contract to print directories for upcoming years, on March 11, 2024, the RLECs proposed the Commission adopt an RLEC proposed replacement for the Commission’s 1967 Directive to annually issue dated telephone directories. These costs can run into thousands of dollars. The RLECs proposed immediate relief.
2. After conferring with Staff, the RLECs and Staff propose the following joint proposed replacement of any current requirement to annually distribute a dated directory, as contained in the 1967 “Directive.”

¹ The “RLECs” are the following companies: Blue Valley Tele-Communications, Inc., Columbus Communications Services, LLC, Craw-Kan Telephone Cooperative, Inc., Cunningham Telephone Co., Inc., Golden Belt Telephone Association, Inc., Gorham Telephone Co., Inc., H&B Communications, Inc., Haviland Telephone Co., Inc., Home Telephone Co., Inc. JBN Telephone Company, Inc., KanOkla Telephone Association, LaHarpe Telephone Co., Inc., Madison Telephone, LLC, Moundridge Telephone Co., Inc., Peoples Telecommunications, LLC, Pioneer Telephone Association, Inc., Rainbow Telecommunications Association, Inc., Rural Telephone Service Co., Inc. d/b/a Nex-Tech, S&A Telephone Co., LLC, S&T Telephone Cooperative Association, Inc., South Central Telephone Association, Inc., Southern Kansas Telephone Co., Inc., Totah Communications, Inc., Tri-County Telephone Association, Inc., Twin Valley Telephone, Inc., United Telephone Association, Inc., Wamego Telecommunications Co., Inc., Wilson Telephone Co., Inc., and Zenda Telephone Co., Inc.

3. As requested in the Petition to open this general investigation, the Staff joins with the RLECs request that the Commission allow the RLECs to make directories available to subscribers in any format or manner an individual RLEC deems most cost-effective, including electronic or web-based form, and provide to any subscriber, upon request, a simple paper/PDF copy of directory information. Staff and the RLECs agree that if an individual RLEC wishes to continue to distribute a formal bound and printed directory it may do so at its discretion.

4. Staff and the RLECs propose that each RLEC, at least 90 days' prior to ceasing the distribution of a printed directory to every subscriber, announce the cessation to all of their subscribers through bill messages, bill inserts, and other methods including website announcements and social media messaging.

5. Staff and the RLECs propose that the message to subscribers include information on (1) how to access any online or electronic directory, and (2) how to request a paper copy of the directory from the RLEC.

6. Staff and the RLECs propose that the message to subscribers also include information on how they can communicate with the RLEC, and if a subscriber chooses, the Commission.

7. Staff and the RLECs agree that when new customers subscribe to RLEC service, the RLECs will inform new customers that they will not be receiving a printed directory, and will provide the new customer with information on how to access an online directory or obtain a printed directory upon request.

8. Staff and the RLECs agree that for RLECs choosing to cease distributing directories, annual reminders will be provided to end users that no directory will be provided and the customer may request a printed directory.

WHEREFORE, Staff and the RLECs request the Commission (1) eliminate any requirement currently existing that mandates RLECs physically print and distribute a telephone directory to subscribers; and (2) allow RLECs to provide directories in any format or manner an individual RLEC deems most cost-effective, including electronic or web-based, and provide a simple paper/PDF copy to subscribers upon request, in accordance with the measures described above and for such other and further relief as the Commission deems just and equitable.

Respectfully submitted,

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VERIFICATION

I, the undersigned, hereby certify under penalty of perjury pursuant to K.S.A. 53-601 that I am an attorney for the companies listed above and that the foregoing is true and correct.
Executed on August 15, 2024.

Colleen R. Jamison

Colleen R. Jamison

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

The undersigned certifies that a copy of the above and foregoing was sent via electronic mail this 15th day of August 2024, to the entities listed on the Commission's service list as last modified August 8, 2024, addressed to the following:

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24-GIMT-380-MIS

I, the undersigned, certify that a true copy of the attached Order has been served to the following by means of electronic service on 08/22/2024.

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